

PITCHING IN

Friends, others help build family's Habitat home

By P. AMY MacKINNON
For The Patriot Ledger

DUXBURY

Standing in what will become his grandson's bedroom, Joe Bradford Jr. spoke about the relief he and his wife feel knowing their son and his family will soon have their own home.

"It's a gift," said Bradford, noting that his wife has colon cancer.

"Especially for her to know these kids are going to have a home in Duxbury, with great schools, and a yard that's a whole acre of land."

The Bradfords must contribute 500 hours of what Habitat calls "sweat equity" into the program.

The kids he's referring to are his son, Joe Bradford III, 23; his wife, Aimee, 25; and their children, Sammy, 5, and Jojo, 2. The house is a Habitat for Humanity project on Congress Street.

Aimee Bradford said she and her husband applied for the house last spring, and within weeks learned they had been chosen over 97 other applicants for the planned three-bedroom colonial. Construction began June 18.

The family is living in what they describe as a dilapidated rental house in Plymouth. The summer cottage is 300 square feet and has



■ Jay Hall, Joe Bradford, Aimee Bradford and Joe Bradford III lift a kitchen cabinet to mount it on a wall.

burlap bags stuffed with pine needles for insulation.

"We knew we had to get out of there," Aimee said. "We just weren't able to buy with two kids, the economy the way it is and housing prices."

As a Habitat family, Aimee and Joe will pay their 20-year, interest-free mortgage directly to Habitat for Humanity and must contribute 500 hours of what Habitat calls "sweat

equity" into the program.

They spend every Saturday building their new home and many weeknights at Habitat meetings or doing office work.

"A certain percentage has to be construction on our own home," Aimee said. "Two hundred hours can be contributed by family and friends, and each adult has to give

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LENDING A HAND



DEBEE TLUMACKI photos/The Patriot Ledger

Neighbor John Schreiber cuts molding during construction on the Habitat home being built for the Bradford family. The house on Congress Street in Duxbury will be the 38th Habitat home completed on the South Shore.

Family builds Habitat house

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150 hours."

On Saturday, the Bradfords and more than 20 friends and relatives were laying flooring, installing windows and assembling cabinets.

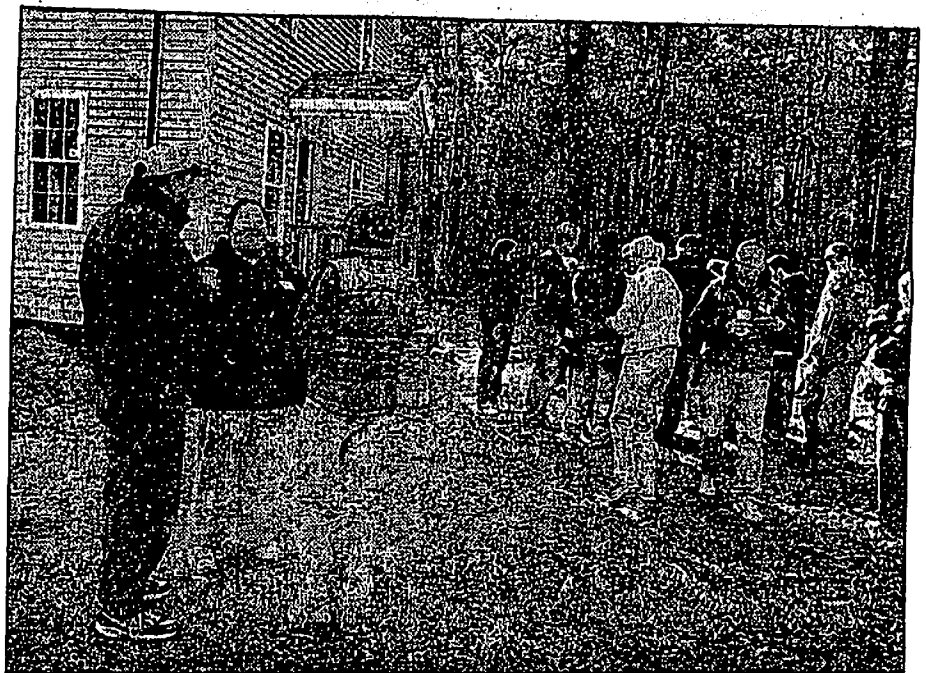
Rita Domena, 16, said she and her mother drove from East Boston to help her cousin Joe and his family install kitchen cabinets. "He's family," Rita said. "And he helped my mom and me on our house."

Patricia Carter, Habitat for Humanity's volunteer site representative for Duxbury, said this will be the 38th Habitat home completed on the South Shore, with projects under way in Brockton, Hingham and Kingston. Carter noted the generosity of contractors who have stopped by with work crews to lay wire and plumbing; restaurants that have dropped off food; and businesses that have donated services and products to welcome the Bradfords.

"We all have work, we all have family, but we all have to make time to give of ourselves," said Carter. "Duxbury has a very strong sense of volunteerism."

Contractor George Ferland of Whitman, who is overseeing construction, devotes his Saturdays to ensuring that volunteers — some of whom have no building experience — build to code. "I kind of feel that since I got a (Habitat) house 10 years ago and my income has gone up considerably, I want to give back," he said.

Joe Bradford said he plans to show his gratitude to Habitat for Humanity by continuing his volunteer work for the organization. "The best thing I could ever do is continue with Habitat whenever they need me, just to be there for them," he said.



■ Family and friends of Almee and Joe Bradford take a coffee break during construction of their Habitat home on Congress Street in Duxbury.



■ Sissy Hall vacuums the living room area during construction of the house.

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■ Joe and Almes Bradford were chosen over 97 other applicants to buy the Habitat for Humanity house.

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